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[www.in.gov/H9](http://www.in.gov/H9)



# Representative Scott Pelath

## Will you be able to vote?

Due to new state laws, you will be required to have a valid Indiana state picture ID to vote on Election Day.



Please visit my website,  
[www.in.gov/H9](http://www.in.gov/H9), to learn more  
about this law and how to obtain  
an identification card and rules con-  
cerning absentee voting.

Representative Scott Pelath  
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Working for You



Pelath Votes NO on Leasing Toll Road



Helping Hoosier Families



Property Tax Relief

# 2006 Session Report



# Additional Property Tax RELIEF

At the start of the 2006 session of the Indiana General Assembly, property tax relief was identified as a priority by members of both parties. When the smoke cleared, we were able to provide some relief for homeowners.

This year, about 1.5 million homeowners will receive a one-time increase in the state homestead credit from 20 to 28 percent. This credit will provide around \$100 million in property tax relief in 2006.

In 2007, the state homestead deduction will increase from \$35,000 to \$45,000 for one year only. This relief will provide an additional \$127 million in relief for homeowners.

Starting in 2008, the state will gradually phase in a cap on property tax bills at two percent of a home's value. This cap would apply to all classes of property in Indiana, starting in 2010.

While this relief is welcome, it still does not make up for the massive increases in local property taxes that were passed on to home and business owners through the biennial state budget that I strongly opposed in 2005. At the time, that budget increased the burden on local property taxpayers to the tune of an estimated \$850 million.

And that means you are still going to see your property taxes go up when you get your next tax bill. The time to have enacted true, lasting property tax relief was 2005, but nothing was done by those in charge.



Rep. Pelath

## Major Moves Pelath votes **NO** on leasing Toll Road

More than anything else, the 2006 session of the Indiana General Assembly will be remembered for Major Moves, the governor's program to lease the Indiana Toll Road for \$3.8 billion to a foreign group for the next 75 years.

This proposal became law, despite public opposition at a level I have never seen before. In large numbers, the people of Indiana said they did not want a public asset built with their tax dollars handed over to a foreign corporation, which then will pocket all profits generated by the toll road for 75 years. I heard you and voted **AGAINST** the plan, but our concerns were not enough to change the minds of the majorities in control of the Indiana House and Senate.

Now that Major Moves has become law, what will happen in Indiana?

From now until 2081, when you travel the Indiana Toll Road, your tolls will be sent overseas.

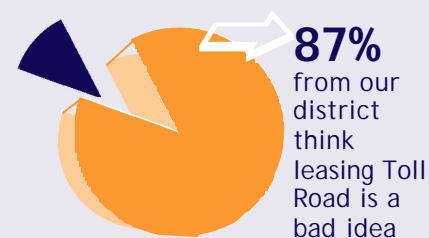
The governor says Indiana will begin work on around 200 road and bridge projects with the \$3.8 billion received from the foreign investors. I believe the sale doesn't provide enough funding to pay for all of the Major Moves projects promised by the governor.

I believe Indiana may regret this deal after the initial spending frenzy comes to an end. This is no twenty-year bond for a road project. This is an act with consequences for Northern Indiana that will last well beyond most of our lifetimes.

The public is clearly against the sale of the Indiana Toll Road, and I believe the governor scrambled to win votes by promising things he simply cannot deliver. I supported a sounder way to help the governor meet his goals—through the use of GARVEE bonds, a tool that leverages future federal highway dollars over a much shorter period to complete projects now.

More time was needed to fully analyze the impact of Major Moves. I fear we will be finding out more and more disturbing details about it as time goes on.

### Hoosiers Voice Opposition to Major Moves



Source: 2006 Legislative survey results.

**FOR  
SALE**



## Indiana tightens eminent domain law

Improving protection for homeowners

In 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that local governments can use the process of eminent domain to take private property, such as homes and businesses, in order to hand it over to a private developer.

Indiana lawmakers immediately began working on a plan to protect the property rights of Hoosiers. Months of bipartisan work has resulted in legislation that tightens Indiana's eminent domain laws and restricts the ability of most government units to seize private property and transfer it to private entities for development.

The new legislation sets strict standards for property acquisition through eminent domain, and limits its use to only truly blighted and decaying properties. This will prevent a developer from being able to have a local government use eminent domain to seize your property simply because they think it might be a good spot for a new strip mall.

It received unanimous support, but there are still potential problems that need to be addressed. Most trou-



Rep. Pelath debates legislation on the House floor.

blesome is the fact that the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is exempt from complying with the new restrictions.

There are concerns that INDOT will use this exemption to seize property for some of the road privatization projects proposed by the governor, such as the Interstate 69 extension or other unannounced projects in other areas of the state.

## A summary of new legislation

### FUNERAL PROTESTS

New legislation increases the penalty for disorderly conduct occurring near the location of a funeral, memorial service, or viewing. The bill is largely in response to a group from Kansas that has chosen to stage protests at the funerals of Hoosier soldiers killed in action, using the occasion to make a political statement.

### SEX OFFENDERS

A series of bills continue our state's efforts to crack down on sex offenders. The bills clarify the designation of "sexually violent predator," require sex offenders to wear GPS tracking devices, establish lifetime parole for these offenders, ban



A Ranking Member of the Rules and Legislative Procedures Committee, Rep. Pelath (right) listens to debate.

sex offenders' access to locations where children may be present, keep better track of sex offenders' whereabouts with the new DOC sex offender registry, and make the crime of human trafficking of a minor a felony.

### HEALTH INITIATIVES

Indiana is moving forward with its improved health initiative, which encourages healthier eating habits among school children by requiring school vending machines to offer more "better choice" food items.

### MILITARY RELIEF FUND

We established the military relief fund to provide grants for Hoosiers whose family members have been called into duty since September 11, 2001. A portion of the money for the fund will be raised through the sale of a new Hoosier veteran license plate created through the bill.

### SCHOOL SAFETY

We have attempted to ensure the safety of schoolchildren and to protect school employees by making possession of a knife on school property or a school bus a Class B misdemeanor, punishable by up to a 180-day prison term or a fine of \$1,000.

### FIREWORKS LAWS

Indiana residents can now launch fireworks on their own property, with certain restrictions. The bill authorizes the discharge of fireworks on personal property or in specially approved fireworks discharge areas and charges a 5 percent public safety fee for the retail sale of fireworks, which will go to the Indiana Department of Homeland Security for training programs for public safety officials.